

of Christ, and strengthen the church, you have grown stronger spiritually. The inner life has been strengthened; the soul has been developed. Faith has grown stronger; hope has grown brighter; love has grown deeper. In this year of earnest, Christian effort, God has broadened and deepened and sweetened your humanity by his love. God has enlightened your understanding by his Word. God has quickened your piety by his Holy Spirit. He has not only blessed you spiritually, but also financially. You have gathered dollars and cents into your treasuries. You have proven yourselves efficient helpers in the home church. The church has learned to feel what a helpful auxiliary the S. S. C. E. is. The mission work of the church has been greatly helped through your beneficent gifts. And now once again conference is approaching when your representatives will be able to compare notes and experiences, and impart enthusiasm one to another. Opportunity will be given not only to each delegate, but to each S. S. C. E. worker to tell of experience gained, lessons learned, blessings received, plans adopted and methods pursued in the work.

Before this communication reaches you, you will all have received report blanks through which the conference will learn the aggregate result of your work for the year. Do not send your report to conference, but send to me promptly after August 1. Five days before opening of conference, I will complete my report, or summary of reports and all reports from the different societies received after that will be left out of the summary. Are you interested in having a full, true, and correct report? Then do not neglect your part of the work.

Again, let every society possible, be represented by delegate. There will be important business to be attended to. Officers must be chosen. The expediency of sending an organizer into the field again must be considered. Ashland college will be opened again in September. The support to be given to its Theological department will be another matter for our consideration.

There will be no sales table at conference this year. We spoke of this in a communication in the EVANGELIST after last conference. It takes some of the sisters away too much of the time from the enjoyment of the regular conference work. We have asked that this year the sisters make their contribution in cash. Quite a number last year did so. Let each society contribute what it can afford from its treasury, and let each sister contribute what she can from her own pocket-book. No matter how small the contribution, it will help. Pennies make dollars, remember. Nothing is small in God's eyes, if given for Christ's sake and in his name,—given cheerfully, ungrudgingly and according as God hath prospered us. If you have but a nickel to spare, give that, and count it a blessed privilege. If you have a dollar or five dollars or ten dollars, give that and thank God that he has abundantly blessed you.

May the coming conference be a blessed one,—blessed in the pleasures it affords those who attend, blessed in its influence and results. May the work done tell in coming years, and on coming generations.

Dayton, Va.

SOMETHING CONFERENCE CAN DO

E. E. HASKINS

It is not hard to see that the lack of power of conference to bring about changes looking to bettering conditions and the unwillingness on the part of the churches to come under any supervision (tho it would materially strengthen the general work) is a problem we ought to face now.

While much good has come and will no doubt come from General Conferences no one will deny that much of its work has ended with its being recorded by the secretary and published by the editor. To lay the blame for this upon the pastor or the local congregation does not help in the least, save as an apology for failure.

The power of conference needs to be defined. If conference has power to do business it ought to have power to see that it is carried out.

If churches can and will represent at conference and then say conference has no or at best very limited authority, then conference work proves a failure just as far as the churches fail to recognize C. authority.

Who is answerable to conference for failures when our accepted standard is that the church is the superior body, over and not under the conference authority? The reasons for the above is what follows below. I believe we need to systematize our work in spreading the gospel. That conference can do no work that will be more blessed or important than to take the problem the local churches have failed in solving and use the grace and brains of the brotherhood in working it out.

There are a number of good brethren without work and many churches without pastors, this ought not, yes, need not be. Not only can these churches and pastors be brought together but they should be. It will never be done or be any better under the present manner of pulpit supply. That is proven in the work of other denominations. You scarcely ever find a church building without preaching in it at least occasionally among churches using an itinerate system, while we find many congregational houses empty for months and even years at a time, tho the doctrine of the church favoring the congregational system is often the better of the two.

That we need some system, many feel that we are ready for it is answered, it seems to me, by the position many of our churches are in.

We need a competent committee whose business it is to know the different pastors and those eligible as pastors and also the churches and their peculiarities and be able and empowered to advise the pastor where he should locate, and the churches who would

suit them. Many a church would have been saved division and many a pastor humiliation, yes, and to the ministry, had some locally disinterested brethren been empowered to at least recommend who should be chosen pastor.

This committee should also see that each congregation held communion service at least once a year. That no church should be six months or a year without a pastor and the young scattering as sheep without a shepherd because some of the older members want brother A and some brother B and neither side will yield.

That churches should be made into circuits, that every church can have occasional preaching, and a revival once every year. I know there are serious objections to the above but space does not permit a review of them, while there are many reasons why this should at least discuss what seems to me to be our greatest need, so as said in the beginning if it is the prerogative of conference to act on this, let it be done, and let conference see it is carried out as far as possible.

QUICKENING

J. M. BOWMAN

I am sure that we are all earnestly desiring that the coming conference shall be the most fruitful. With most of us, probably, the thought is for the best plans and methods to be devised and adopted as the way of securing the largest permanent returns. To be sure, we all seek for fruit that will abide.

With many it may be that setting forward some new movement, will be thought to be the highest thing to do to secure the fruit. And yet another will have some other way. The work is so many-sided, at least looking, as many do, on the needs from without, that one may very easily be confused and work only on one corner to the hurt of the other parts of the work.

No doubt all of our plans and methods are very good, but we must not forget that they are dead things and can possibly give no real life. The law of fruitfulness is from the vine to the branches. The editor said to me not long ago, "It is not better plans or methods, or a larger knowledge of what and how to do, that we need so much as we need quickening and inspiration."

It is not plans to quicken but just quickening for all who may be in attendance. It is not to store up quickening power that can be opened and used as needed through the year. But just quickening that we may realize that God can give life and that we can have it from him day by day.

A quickening that will be of real value must come through the word of God. Look through the 119 Psalm and see how David many times prayed for quickening. With thy precepts: thy word: according to thy word, etc. Surely much blessing would come to us if we could receive some wise teaching of the word of God in the conference. Not teaching in a striving spirit or for argument sake as is so often done. For any one can talk smartly about words and sentences if he